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NSC Briefing

12 August 1954

NEW SOVIET MA'S IN SATELLITES

- I. With the arrival of Col. Gen. A.P. Beloborodov as Soviet Military Attache to Czechoslovakia, the USSR has completed the replacement of its MA's in all the East European Satellites.
 - a. Replacement has occurred since mid-1953.
 - b. Pattern of military backgrounds has emerged among new appointees.
- II. In general, new appointees have more distinguished combat records than their predecessors.
 - a. All commanded corps or higher during World War II, whereas most of predecessors had commanded units no larger than division.
 - b. Five are of Soviet two-star rank (Lieutenant General), following a trend toward the upgrading of these posts evident since 1950.
 - c. Czechoslovakia is still accorded the highest-ranking Soviet MA, a three-star Colonel General. This has been true since 1950.
 - d. All but one of the new appointees hold the Order of the Gold Star, with accompanying title "Hero of the Soviet Union," the highest Soviet decoration.
- III. The new appointees are:
 - a. Czechoslovakia (July 54), Col. Gen. A.P. Beloborodov, twice Hero of Soviet Union (HSU)

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- b. Poland (April 54), Lt. Gen. V.R. Vashkevich
- c. Rumania (Dec 53), Lt. Gen. D.I. Smirnov, HSU
- d. Bulgaria (Dec 53), Lt. Gen. M.N. Zavodovski, HSU
- e. Hungary (Nov 53), Lt. Gen. M.F. Tikhonov, HSU
- f. Albania (Sept 53), Lt. Gen. A.I. Rodimtsev, HSU.

IV. Soviet MA's in the Satellites are responsible for general supervision and training of individual Satellite armed forces. Recent appointments of highly competent professional officers signifies new phase in Satellite military development, with emphasis on improving combat efficiency.

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Background

General officer ranks, Soviet ground forces: On Duty:

Marshal of the Soviet Union (large star with national insignia)	12*
Marshal of a branch of service (large star with branch insignia)	8
General of the Army (four stars)	19
Colonel General (three stars)	appr 145
Lieutenant General (two stars)	appr 975
Major General (one star)	appr 4200

* This total includes Marshal K.K. Rokossovski, who is a Marshal of the Soviet Union as well as Marshal of Poland and Polish Defense Minister.

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Background

HERO OF THE SOVIET UNION

This title is conferred upon recipients of the Order of the Gold Star.

The Gold Star, which is worn on the left breast above all other decorations, has the highest order of precedence of any Soviet award and can be conferred only by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

It is awarded to individuals, both civilian and military, who have accomplished outstanding feats contributing to the honor and material development of the USSR.

Regulations adopted in World War II prescribe that the recipient of the Gold Star shall have a bust of himself placed in his native town; two or more awards of this order entitle him to a full-length statue.

During World War II, 10,940 men from all branches of service were awarded the Order of the Gold Star.

About 100 were awarded it twice, and three received it three times--Marshal G.K. Zhukov and the two top air aces.

The total contrasts with the 431 Congressional Medals of Honor awarded by the US for service in World War II.